

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS, NOVEMBER 14, 2009.

The City Council of the City of Leon Valley, Texas, met on the 14th day of November 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at the Leon Valley City Council Chambers, at 6400 El Verde Road, Leon Valley, Texas, for the purpose of the following business, to-wit:

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING - 9:00 A.M.

Call to order.

Mayor Riley called the Special City Council Meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. and asked that the minutes reflect the following members of Council were present: Garcia, Reyna, Baldrige, and Nelson.

City Manager Lambert, City Secretary Feutz, City Accountant Wallace, Fire Chief Irwin, Police Chief Wallace, Community Development Director Flores, Library Director Trent, Economic Development Director Ryan, Assistant Public Works Director Stolz, and HR Officer/Assistant City Secretary Caldera were also present.

Councilman Dean arrived at 9:12 a.m.

Mayor Riley welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked them for their interest and commitment.

Presentation and discussion on the proposed overlay standards for the new Redevelopment Master Plan.

Mayor Riley provided a short history of work the City has done, including the workshops with the American Institute of Architects' Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) in 2008, that have led the City to work with a consulting team for a redevelopment master plan.

A. Presentation by Halff Associates

Jim Carrillo, Director of Planning for Halff Associates, provided an explanation of the redevelopment plan to be completed before the moratorium ends in the middle of December 2009. He surveyed the groups for residents, real estate brokers, and Leon Valley business community members present for the meeting.

Mr. Carrillo presented the six key focus areas for the plan: long-term economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, strengthening the identity of Leon Valley Bandera Road opportunities and constraints, future redevelopment opportunities, and a guide for future development and redevelopment in Leon Valley. He explained that the desired future for Leon Valley included a strong sense of place and identity, a pedestrian friendly environment that would also be attractive. He reviewed the existing development regulations for the current land-use based development regulations for the City's residential and commercial districts. Mr. Carrillo then explained the principles of "form-based" zoning which encourages social interaction by improving the environment and creating a sense of place and community which allows mixed uses in districts, and regulates the design of buildings to create a more appealing environment including

landscaping, sign standards, parking requirements, and lot standards. He presented examples of proposed standards for landscaping that would add streetscaping, a point system for landscaping standards, add perimeter landscaping, and include tree requirements. He presented proposed standards for parking areas which would include landscaping, interconnections between lots, and redefine where parking would be in relation to commercial buildings. He outlined proposed sign standards for all types of signs in the City to improve the view of Leon Valley particularly along Bandera Road.

Mr. Carrillo informed the audience on the definition of an "overlay district" and explained what the overlay components would regulate including: building envelope, building form, permitted and not permitted uses, parking, and landscape/streetscape standards. He proposed two separate overlay districts: a sustainability overlay zone and a commercial/industrial overlay zone. Mr. Carrillo explained that the sustainability zone is proposed to include an area along Bandera Road from Huebner almost to Wurzbach Road and included retail and commercial areas along side streets off Bandera Road such as Eckert, Poss, Grissom, Wurzbach, and Huebner Roads. He explained that the Commercial/Industrial proposed overlay zone included business areas on Bandera Road from just south of Wurzbach to the eastern city boundaries along Evers, Loop 410, and Bandera Roads and were primarily commercial and industrial zoned properties.

Mr. Carrillo reviewed the desired characteristics of both zones and presented slides which illustrated the general areas for each proposed overlay zone. He explained that the overlay zones do not replace the current zoning code regulations, but add another layer of standards for properties within the zone. He described point systems for architectural features and landscape standards that would require the property owner to make changes as redevelopment or development occurs on their property.

Mr. Carrillo explained that the City will need to find ways to encourage improvements of existing buildings and to tighten regulations regarding continuance of nonconforming uses to clean up Bandera Road to make it a gateway into Leon Valley and to encourage investment. He reviewed challenges to the redevelopment plan that included reducing the size and number of signs on a property and the restricted use of temporary signs, the challenges of TxDOT right-of-way for major landscaping, and the challenge to relocate or bury overhead utilities along Bandera Road. He made suggestions that existing buildings could implement such as adding awnings, adding parking area landscaping, making modifications to building facades, and making improvements to pedestrian arcades with paving and decorative landscaping.

He reminded everyone that the proposed standards and overlay districts were not meant to be punitive to businesses but rather to improve the development standard to make the area better for development. In closing his presentation he reminded everyone of the next steps to complete the redevelopment plan with hearings before the Zoning Commission on November 23rd and before the City Council on December 1st

B. Discussion and Public Comment

Discussion by the members of City Council and the audience of approximately 48 persons involved clarification of the proposed standards and how currently developed properties could be provided incentives to begin making changes to the City's business properties. Mr. Carrillo cautioned everyone that the changes would take time and decisions would have to be made regarding transitioning non-conforming uses. Discussion areas included the challenges of Bandera Road and consideration of any imminent domain takings by TxDOT for Bandera Road improvements in the future, new

uses moving into older development, how the City would transition signs and development standards, and how the new overlay standards would become effective. Funding options to provide incentives were discussed to include possible grants, use of CIED funds, and economic development sales tax assistance.

Members of the audience agreed that the proposed changes would improve Leon Valley.

No formal actions or votes were taken at this meeting.

Adjourn.

Mayor Riley thanked everyone for their attendance and thanked Mr. Carrillo for his presentation and his work on the redevelopment master plan.

Hearing no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Reyna, seconded by Councilmember Dean, to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no objections, Mayor Riley announced the meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m..

ATTEST:

Chris Riley
Mayor

Marie Feutz
City Secretary

Approved by unanimous vote of City Council at the Regular City Council Meeting of Dec. 2, 2009